

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4373

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 TOKYO 0722

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS - 1

TAGS: JA UR CH PBOR PEPR

SUBJECT: JAPANESE FONMIN SONODA'S MISSION TO MOSCOW

REF: A. TOKYO 0471 B. MOSCOW 0437

SUMMARY: JAPANESE WERE NOT SURPRISED, OR INDEED PARTICULARLY  
DISPLEASED, BY STALEMATED OUTCOME OF FONMIN SONODA'S TALKS  
IN MOSCOW. SONODA'S UNUSUALLY FIRM INSISTENCE IN EMPHASIZING  
NORTHERN TERRITORIES PROBLEM ELICITED PREDICTABLY NEGATIVE  
SOVIET REACTION, RESULTING IN JAPANESE REFUSAL TO SIGN ANY  
COMMUNIQUE. JAPANESE DELIBERATELY ATTEMPTED TO IMPRESS UPON  
SOVIETS THEIR DETERMINATION TO MAINTAIN THEIR BASIC POSITION  
ON SUCH ISSUES IN FACE OF SOVIET PRESSURE AND TO TIE FURTHER  
PROGRESS IN OVERALL RELATIONS, INCLUDING SOME ASPECTS  
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OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION, TO FAVORABLE RESOLUTION OF  
SUCH POLITICAL PROBLEMS. JAPANESE, AND SONODA IN  
PARTICULAR, ALSO SAW SOME DOMESTIC POLITICAL ADVANTAGE  
IN PUBLICLY STANDING UP TO SOVIETS. IN AFTERMATH  
OF MOSCOW TALKS, THERE IS GENERAL EXPECTATION THAT GOJ  
WILL NOW MOVE AHEAD WITH PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY (PFT)  
WITH CHINA -- LESS OUT OF ANY ANTI-SOVIET PIQUE THAN FOR ITS OWN

POLITICAL PURPOSES. FONOFF, HOWEVER, IS NOT UNDULY CONCERNED OVER EXPECTED EXPRESSIONS OF SOVIET DISPLEASURE OVER THIS DEVELOPMENT.  
END SUMMARY.

1. SONODA'S TALKS IN MOSCOW: CONVERSATIONS WITH FONOFF OFFICIALS AND JOURNALISTS CLOSE TO SONODA HAVE CONFIRMED THAT JAPANESE WERE NEITHER SURPRISED NOR DISTURBED BY RESULTS OF FONMIN'S VISIT TO MOSCOW. AS NOTED REFTELS, JAPANESE WENT TO MOSCOW WITH FIRM INTENTION, AGREED UPON AT CABINET LEVEL, NOT ONLY TO PRESS THEIR CLAIM TO NORTHERN TERRITORIES BUT ALSO TO EMPHASIZE TO SOVIETS THAT ANY SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN BILATERAL RELATIONS WOULD BE KEYED TO RESOLUTION OF THIS TERRITORIAL ISSUE. THOUGH GOJ HAD SOUGHT RESUMPTION OF FOREIGN MINISTERIAL TALKS AS NECESSARY SYMBOL THAT BILATERAL ATMOSPHERICS HAD MOVED OUT OF POST-MIG 25 AND FISHERIES CHILL OF LAST YEAR, THEY FELT UNDER NO COMPULSION TO CAP SONODA-GROMYKO MEETINGS WITH COMMUNIQUE WHICH DID NOT AT LEAST CONTAIN LANGUAGE FROM 1973 TANAKA-BREZHNEV COMMUNIQUE REFERRING TO EXISTENCE OF UNRESOLVED POSTWAR PROBLEMS (I.E. DISPUTED ISLANDS). JAPANESE DELEGATION DID NOT REALISTICALLY EXPECT ANY SIGNS OF SOVIET FLEXIBILITY ON THIS ISSUE AT THIS TIME.

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2. ACCORDING TO FONOFF 1ST EAST EUROPE (SOVIET) DIVDIR TOGO, TERRITORIAL ISSUE BECAME CENTERPIECE OF MOSCOW TALKS. JAPANESE FONMIN, FOR INSTANCE, LITERALLY BRUSHED ASIDE SOVIET DRAFT OF GOOD NEIGHBOR TREATY, INTERRUPTING GROMYKO'S PRESENTATION TO STATE FLATLY THAT ANY SUCH TREATY WHICH DID NOT DEAL WITH TERRITORIAL PROBLEM WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE. CONSEQUENTLY, REMAINDER OF TALKS (WITH EXCEPTION OF COMMENTS ON CHINA DISCUSSED BELOW) WERE ANTI-CLIMATIC AND INCONCLUSIVE, THOUGH COUCHED IN EXPRESSIONS OF MUTUAL DESIRE FOR FRIENDLY RELATIONS. SOVIETS, FOR EXAMPLE, PROMISED TO CONSIDER JAPANESE REQUESTS FOR FACILITATION OF GRAVE-SITE VISITS AND REPATRIATION CASES. BOTH SIDES AGREED TO PURSUE CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON INTERNATIONAL SITUATION FOLLOWED PREDICTABLE LINES.

3. GROMYKO DID NOT RAISE IN ANY DETAIL QUESTION OF BILATERAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION OR SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT. TOGO ASSUMED THAT AS THIS ISSUE WAS MORE IN PROVINCE OF FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER PATOLICHEV, GROMYKO PROBABLY SAW LITTLE NEED TO DISCUSS IT AT LENGTH IN THIS SESSION. TOGO OBSERVED THAT JAPANESE OFFER TO SET UP ECONOMIC

MINISTERIAL CONSULTATIONS WAS MET WITH LESS THAN COMPLETE ENTHUSIASM BY SOVIETS -- LARGELY BECAUSE JAPANESE NOT ONLY MADE CLEAR THAT CONSULTATIONS DID NOT IMPLY OFFICIAL GOJ COMMITMENT TO ANY LONG-TERM COOPRATIVE PROJECTS, BUT ALSO LINKED CONSULTATIONS TO IMPROVEMENT IN POLIPCAL RELATIONS BY INSISTING THAT MINISTERIAL TEAMS BE HEADED BY RESPECTIVE FOREIGN MINISTERS.

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INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
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AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
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4. AS NOTED IN REF A, BOTH GROMYKO AND KOSYGIN EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT UNNAMED THIRD COUNTRY (CHINA) WAS ATTEMPTING TO MOVE JAPAN INTO ANTI-SOVIET POSTURE. ACCORDING TO TOGO, SONODA REPLIED THAT BASIS FOR JAPANESE FOREIGN POLICY WAS US-JAPAN ALLIANCE, BEYOND WHICH JAPAN SOUGHT FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH BOTH SOVIET UNION AND PRC. SONODA STATED THAT JAPAN WAS MOVING TOWARDS RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH CHINESE FOR PFT, BUT THAT THIS TREATY WOULD NOT BE AN ANTI-SOVIET ALLIANCE. AS STRICTLY BILATERAL MATTER WITH CHINA, PFT SIGNATURE WOULD BE DECISION OF GOJ ALONE AND WAS NOT PROPER ISSUE OF CONCERN FOR ANY THIRD COUNTRY. SOVIETS DID NOT PURSUE QUESTION.

5. JAPANESE PERCEPTIONS AND MOTIVATIONS: AS US TRADE

NEGOTIATORS CAN ATTEST, NEGOTIATIONS WITH JAPANESE CAN  
OFTEN BE QUITE ARDUOUS. NEVERTHELESS, THERE WERE  
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ELEMENTS OF A DIRECT AND CONFIDENT TOUGHNESS IN MOSCOW  
TALKS WHICH WERE UNCHARACTERISTIC FOR JAPANESE DIPLOMATS,  
PARTICULARLY IN THEIR DEALINGS WITH BIG POWERS. JAPANESE  
OFFICIALS SUGGEST THAT SONODA'S HARD LINE IN MOSCOW WAS  
MORE THAN JUST TACTICAL PLOY BUT RATHER REFLECTION OF  
REVISED POLICY ASSESSMENT OF HOW BEST TO MANAGE  
RELATIONSHIP WITH SOVIETS.

6. TOGO AND OTHERS AT FONOFF HAVE STATED THAT PRIMARY  
JAPANESE OBJECTIVE IN MOSCOW TALKS HAD BEEN TO DISPEL  
ANY IMPRESSION AMONG SOVIETS THAT GOJ HAD IN ANY WAY  
COMPROMISED ITS BASIC POSITION ON NORTHERN TERRITORIES  
THROUGH COMPLEX SETTLEMENT OF LAST YEAR'S FISHERIES  
NEGOTIATIONS. TOGO AND HIS DEPUTY AOKI HAVE NOTED THAT  
FROM EVIDENCE OF SOVIET BEHAVIOR IN FISHERIES DISPUTE  
LAST SPRING, IT WAS APPARENT THAT SOVIETS BELIEVED  
JAPANESE WOULD BE WILLING TO GIVE WAY ON KEY POLITICAL  
ISSUES OUT OF ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS (EITHER DESIRE TO  
PRESERVE ACCESS TO SUCH RESOURCES AS FISH OR HOPE FOR  
FUTURE PROFITS FROM SOVIET MARKETS). AS LONG AS SOVIETS  
HAD THIS MISPERCEPTION, BILATERAL RELATIONS WOULD CONTINUE  
TO BE DISRUPTED BY PERIODIC SOVIET ATTEMPTS TO EXERT SUCH  
LEVERAGE.

7. GOGO STATED THAT GOJ POLICY-MAKERS HAD GRADUALLY  
COME TO CONCLUSION THAT ALTHOUGH FUTURE SOVIET ATTEMPTS TO  
PUT SQUEEZE ON JAPAN THROUGH SUCH AREAS AS FISHERIES  
MIGHT CAUSE SOME DISCOMFORT (THOUGH LESS SO THAN IN LAST YEAR),  
GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE ABLE TO RIDE OUT THIS PRESSURE --  
PARTICULARLY IF SUPPORTED BY PUBLIC CONSENSUS THAT JAPAN  
SHOULD STAND FIRM. MORE DRASTIC SOVIET MEASURES, HE OBSERVED,  
WOULD EVENTUALLY BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE, BASED ON ASSUMPTION  
THAT SOVIETS, NOT JAPANESE, STOOD TO LOSE MORE FROM ANY  
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MAJOR OR LASTING DETERIORATION OF RELATIONS.

8. AS FOR JAPANESE LEVERAGE ON SOVIETS, TOGO  
ASSERTED THAT FUTURE GOJ DECISIONS IN BILATERAL  
ECONOMIC FIELD WOULD BE GAUGED TO STATE OF POLITICAL  
RELATIONS "IN SITUATIONS WHERE OFFICIAL ACTIONS WOULD  
BE MOST EFFECTIVE." HE NOTED THAT IN SOME PRIVATE

COMMERCIAL TRANSACTIONS WITH SOVIETS, GOVERNMENTAL INPUT AND INFLUENCE WAS RELATIVELY LIMITED, BUT THAT IN SUCH MAJOR PROJECTS AS ENVISIONED IN SOVIET-PROPOSED LONG-TERM GOVERNMENTAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT, GOJ'S VOICE WOULD BE MUCH GREATER. HE WAS UNWILLING TO SPECULATE AT THIS TIME AS TO FUTURE OF SPECIFIC SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

9. THERE WERE OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING TONE OF MOSCOW TALKS IN ADDITION TO THOSE CONSIDERATIONS SET FORTH BY TOGO. IN STANDING FIRM ON NORTHERN TERRITORIES, JAPANESE DELEGATION WAS ALSO PLAYING TO DOMESTIC AUDIENCE. JAPANESE VOTING PUBLIC HAS BEEN NOT ONLY UNANIMOUS IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL CLAIM TO DISPUTED ISLANDS BUT ALSO HIGHLY CRITICAL OF ANY HINT OF COMPROMISING THAT CLAIM. JAPANESE PERFORMANCE IN MOSCOW WAS POLITICALLY USEFUL FOR LDP IN DISARMING CRITICISM THAT GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN UNNECESSARILY WEAK IN ITS DEALINGS WITH SOVIETS ON FISHERIES.

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P 170823Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
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10. TALKS ALSO SHOWED INFLUENCE OF NEW JAPANESE FONMIN'S POLITICAL VIEWS AND PERSONAL STYLE. SONODA, WHO DELIGHTS IN JAPANESE-STYLE MACHISMO, CLEARLY RELISHED PUBLIC OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY TOUGH-GUY WITH

UNPOPULAR SOVIETS AND HAS ALREADY RECEIVED MEDIA APPLAUSE FOR HIS "VIRILE DIPLOMACY." VOCAL ADVOCATE OF CHINA PFT, SONODA MADE NO SECRET OF HIS PLEASURE WITH GROMYKO'S BLUNT REJECTION OF JAPANESE TERRITORIAL CLAIMS, APPARENTLY ON ASSUMPTION THAT ANY SUDDEN SOVIET FLEXIBILITY AT THIS PARTICULAR MOMENT MIGHT DERAIL MOVEMENT WITHIN GOJ TOWARDS RE-OPENING OF PFT NEGOTIATIONS WITH CHINESE. SOME OBSERVERS HAVE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT, WITH EYE TOWARDS PEKING, SONODA SAW ADVANTAGE IN REFUTING PAST CHINESE CRITICISMS BY DEMONSTRATING THAT JAPANESE WERE NOT UNWILLING TO STAND UP TO SOVIETS.

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11. NEXT STAGE IN RELATIONSHIP: SONODA MISSION HAS NOT SPARKED EMOTIONALLY INTENSE ANTI-SOVIET POPULAR REACTION SIMILAR TO THAT OF LAST SPRING -- LARGELY BECAUSE CONTINUED SOVIET REFUSAL TO ADMIT EXISTENCE OF TERRITORIAL PROBLEM HAD BEEN SO PREDICTABLE AND UNLIKE SOVIET 200 MILE ZONE DID NOT HAVE IMMEDIATE ADVERSE ECONOMIC IMPACT. BOTH GOJ SPOKESMEN AND PRESS COMMENTATORS HAVE DELIBERATELY TAKEN FIRM BUT MODERATE TONE, EXPRESSING REGRET AND DISAPPROVAL OF SOVIET POSITION, BUT ALSO NOTING BOTH COUNTRIES' DESIRE FOR FRIENDLY RELATIONS.

12. WITH COMPLETION OF TALKS WITH SOVIETS, HOWEVER, SPECULATION HAS INCREASED THAT GOJ WILL NOW MOVE AHEAD WITH CHINA PFT -- LESS OUT OF ANY ANTI-SOVIET PIQUE THAN FOR ITS OWN POLITICAL PURPOSES. CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY ABE REPORTEDLY SUGGESTED TO PRESS THAT NEGOTIATIONS WITH CHINESE MIGHT BEGIN IN NEAR FUTURE. BEFORE DEPARTING FOR MIDEAST TRIP, SONODA MET WITH PM FUKUDA AND ABE TO DISCUSS CHINA TREATY, BUT ACCORDING TO BOTH FONOFF CHINA DIVISION OFFICIALS AND REPORTERS COVERING PM, FUKUDA HAS NOT YET MADE FINAL DECISION. HE IS SCHEDULED TO CONSULT WITH LDP SEC GEN OHIRA ON PFT THIS WEEK. THERE IS GENERAL EXPECTATION THAT OFFICIAL GOJ POSITION ON RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE REVEALED IN SPEECHES BY FUKUDA AND SONODA AT REOPENING OF DIET ON JANUARY 21.

13. TOGO OBSERVED THAT SOVIET REACTION TO POSSIBLE JAPANESE DECISION TO RE-OPEN PFT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD SET TONE FOR JAPAN-SOVIET RELATIONS FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE. SOME JAPANESE COMMENTATORS, HE NOTED, HAD REMARKED ON RELATIVE MILDNESS OF SOVIET COMMENTS TO SONODA ON PFT, CONFIDENTIAL

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CONCLUDING THAT SOVIETS NOW UNDERSTOOD AND ACCEPTED JAPANESE POSITION. (MASTERS OF NUANCE IN THEIR OWN COMMUNICATIONS, JAPANESE OCCASIONALLY ATTRIBUTE SIMILAR SUBTLETIES TO FOREIGNERS, SOMETIMES WITH UNFORTUNATE RESULTS.) ACCORDING TO TOGO, GOJ POLICY-MAKERS WERE UNDER NO SUCH ILLUSION. THEY FULLY EXPECTED, BUT WERE NOT UNDULY CONCERNED, THAT SOVIETS WOULD EXPRESS THEIR DISPLEASURE OVER EVENTUAL CONCLUSION OF PFT. AT THIS TIME, TOGO STATED, FONOFF BELIEVED THAT SOVIETS WOULD RESPOND WITH HARSH PRESS COMMENTARY, BUT WOULD BE RELATIVELY RESTRAINED IN TAKING MORE CONCRETE ACTION. SHERMAN

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## Message Attributes

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